

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 15 November 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor P Winstanley,
Mr D Stevens.

Apologies: Professor R Higgott, Professor M Taylor.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of HR, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for item 129/10-11), Director of Student Careers & Skills (for items 137/10-11 and 138/10-11), International Research Development Officer (for item 140/10-11), Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) (for item 141/10-11), Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity) (for item 141/10-11).

125/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2010 be approved.

126/10-11 West Midlands Regional Observatory (minute 113/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

(a) That Marketing Birmingham had expressed an interest in acquiring the West Midlands Regional Observatory assets, and had asked if the University would be interested in compiling a joint bid.

(by the Director of Development, Communications and Strategy)

(b) That part of the benefit of the potential joint bid would be that the University would gain access to useful data on which to further build the business and public affairs platform, without an obligation to transfer staff to the University.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

(c) That uncertainty remained over whether the University of Birmingham would be submitting an independent bid.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar and the Director of Development, Communications and Strategy explore further the potential benefits of the joint bid with Marketing Birmingham for the West Midlands Regional Observatory, to determine whether an initial bid should be submitted by the deadline of 19 November 2010.

127/10-11 University Financial Plan (minute 105/10-11 refers)

RECEIVED:

A letter from HEFCE stating that the deadline for submission of institutional Financial Plans beyond 2010/11 had been extended from 1 December 2010 until April 2011, noting that it still required Plans for 2009/10 and 2010/11 to be submitted by the original deadline (SC.101/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That despite the late change in HEFCE's position, the University still intended to submit its Financial Plan by the original deadline of 1 December 2010.

128/10-11 UUK: University Leaders Statement of Intent on Sustainable Development (minute 270/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

An update report on the UUK's invitation for university leaders to support a statement of intent on sustainable development (SC.93/10-11).

REPORTED: (by Director of Estates)

- (a) That the Steering Committee resolved at its meeting on 27 January 2010 that the University would not write to support the statement as circulated as SC.187/09-10.
- (b) That it was possible to use the statement as evidence to support a variety of sustainability performance indicators, including CIF2.
- (c) That signing the statement would incur no additional burden on the University as the University was already committed to undertaking the activities outlined therein and that it would provide supporting evidence of the University's commitment in this area, despite the tone of the letter not being precisely how the University would wish it to be.

RESOLVED:

That the University would write to support the statement as circulated as SC.187/09-10.

129/10-11 QAA Consultation on the Proposed Successor to Institutional Audit (minute 43/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the QAA consultation on the proposed successor to Institutional Audit, from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (SC.95/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That he extended his thanks to the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) for the work undertaken on drafting this response.

(by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (b) That she would attend the QAA round table discussion meeting about the consultation on Thursday 18 November to voice the University's opinion and to obtain a sense of responses from other institutions.

RESOLVED:

That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) liaise with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and the Student Experience) in drafting a covering letter to the University's response to the consultation, to clarify the University's concerns regarding the proposed changes and submit the University's response prior to the deadline of 26 November 2010.

130/10-11

Fee cap

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, as it was a regulatory matter, it was understood that the change to the fee cap would be considered by Parliament before Christmas.

131/10-11

Space utilisation

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That it was probable that there would be no new capital funding from HEFCE.

(b) That the Government did not consider that higher education institutions were effectively utilising the space currently available, especially for teaching.

(by the Director of Estates)

(c) That in relation to future sustainability, better space management and refurbishment were likely to be the most effective way forward.

RESOLVED:

That the University's continued efforts in achieving efficient utilisation of space be supported.

132/10-11

Home/EU student numbers

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, on a national level, there were a variety of options being considered as to how Home/EU student numbers could be controlled and that this would be complicated by the ongoing funding debate.

133/10-11

Higher Education Academy subject centres

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That the Higher Education Academy (HEA) subject centres would not exist from the end of the 2010/11 academic year.

(by the Registrar)

(b) That the letter informing of HEA subject centre closure would be tabled at the next Steering Committee on 22 November 2010.

(c) That the University would review the implications of not continuing with subscription to the HEA.

134/10-11

Universities UK President

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Professor Eric Thomas, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol, had been confirmed as the next president of Universities UK.

135/10-11

Student protest in London

REPORTED: (by the President of the Student's Union)

(a) That he condemned the violence that occurred at the student protest against the proposed rise in fees held in London on 10 November 2010.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

(b) That the violence that took place surrounding the protest was unfortunate and undermined the students' case.

136/10-11

Vision 2015 – 2010 update

CONSIDERED:

The revised Vision 2015 strategy document (SC.102/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That the revised Vision 2015 strategy document would be tabled for discussion at the Senate Briefing to be held on 16 November.

(b) That the revision of the Vision 2015 strategy document was necessary to respond to the changing environment within the UK and increasing competition from overseas.

(c) That the revised Vision 2015 strategy document was an attempt to achieve what is realistic, whilst adding to the ambition and achievements that were presented in the original Vision 2015 strategy.

(d) That the revised Vision 2015 strategy document would be supported by an implementation document outlining in further detail the actions that are proposed to support achievement of the goals and objectives within the Strategy.

(by the Registrar)

(e) That there would be increasing dialogue with FE institutions regarding the expansion of their offer, including 2+2 degrees.

(f) That it was particularly timely to refresh the Vision 2015 strategy document now, given the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Browne report.

(g) That the revised Vision 2015 strategy document would be positioned as an open document for staff feedback following editing after the special briefing of the Senate to be held on 16 November.

(by the Director of Development, Communication & Strategy)

(h) That the structure of the original document was maintained to ensure clarity, but consideration could be given to the distribution of Internationalism goals across all sections of the revised Vision 2015 strategy document.

RESOLVED:

That the amendments to the draft Vision 2015 strategy document agreed in the meeting of the Steering Committee would be made by the Director of Development, Communication & Strategy, noting that further consideration be given in particular to the following:

- (a) Goal 1 (to make Warwick an undisputed world leader in Research and Scholarship), Objective 3: that resource, in addition to administrative support, would be re-oriented to enhance priority research areas that would make a globally distinctive contribution.
- (b) Goal 2 (to ensure a high-quality and distinctive Warwick student experience): that inclusion of the Student's Union's work could demonstrate competitive advantage.
- (c) Goal 4 (to enhance our reputation with stakeholders in the UK and overseas): that reference be made to an integrated approach to developing further strong partnerships with healthcare providers, reflecting the growth in involvement of a number of departments in health research.

137/10-11 Revised Unistats Employability Statement

CONSIDERED:

The revised Unistats Employability Statement, from the Director of Student Careers and Skills (SC.90/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Careers and Skills)

- (a) That, given the current position of Year 13 students in the UCAS cycle, it would be advantageous to produce a revised Employability statement, for use on the Unistats and Student Careers and Skills websites.
- (b) That the obligation for all institutions to provide an Employability Statement to HEFCE by the deadline of 31 August 2010 was not met by all institutions and that there seemed to be no noticeable sanction in this regard.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University's Employability Statement would be considered by the Steering Committee annually.
- (b) That the revised Employability Statement be approved and published on the Unistats website, subject to the Director of Student Careers and Skills incorporating any further comments provided outside the meeting by Steering Committee members.

138/10-11 Centre for Student Careers & Skills - update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Student Careers and Skills, outlining the activities of the Centre for Student Careers and Skills, (SC.86/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Careers and Skills)

- (a) That the new service model launched by Student Careers and Skills would provide more outreach within academic departments to engage with students which should improve employability.
- (b) That a recent CBI report surveyed 800 members, of which 73% identified work experience as the factor most likely to positively affect a graduate's employability.

- (c) That work was being undertaken in liaison with departments to achieve closer integration of employability skills development (including work experience) within the academic curriculum.
- (d) That current collection methods for the DLHE survey were unsuitable for use by league table compilers, as an indicator of long-term employability.
- (e) That “my Advantage”, the new Careers software, recorded that currently 35% of the University’s student body were engaged with at least one of the services provided by the Centre for Student Careers and Skills.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (f) That all departments should be ensuring that employability skills development are integrated within the academic curriculum.

(by the President of the Student’s Union)

- (g) That the “myAdvantage” tool had made a huge improvement to the support available to the University’s students.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the issues raised and progress achieved in the Centre for Student Careers and Skills update as set out in paper SC.86/10-11.

139/10-11

REF Research Impact Pilot reports

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report by the Technopolis Group, with feedback on REF Research Impact Pilot submissions (SC.104/10-11).
- (b) A report by HEFCE, outlining findings of the chairs of the Research Impact Pilot panels (SC.105/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the pilot exercise was undertaken in five units of assessment (UOAs):
 - (i) Clinical Medicine
 - (ii) Physics
 - (iii) Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
 - (iv) Social Work and Social Policy
 - (v) English Language and Literature
- (b) That there were 19 recommendations, grouped within 3 headings:
 - (i) Defining research impact
 - (ii) Evidence of impact provided by institutions
 - (iii) The assessment of impact by REF panels
- (c) That 324 case studies were considered over the five UOAs and HEFCE concluded that it would be possible to assess impact arising from research in these disciplines.

- (d) That while impact would definitely be a significant criteria in the 2014 REF, it was not yet determined if the weighting of impact should remain at 25% as currently proposed.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro Vice-Chancellors for Research ensure the reports are considered at the Research Committee and at Faculty Research Committees to consider the University's strategic approach to research impact and to feed back to the Steering Committee at a meeting in the new year.

140/10-11 BIS EU Framework Programme – Call for Evidence

CONSIDERED:

A report from the International Research Development Officer providing the timetable for finalising the University's response to the Government's consultation on the EU Framework Programme (SC.94/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the International Research Development Officer)

That despite the move of the Marie Curie Programme Units from the Directorate-General for Research to the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, the implication was that the Units would remain within the EU Framework Programme.

RESOLVED:

That, as the deadline for submission of a response to the consultation was 4 January 2011, the Steering Committee consider at a future meeting prior to submission the proposed University response, to be compiled by 15 December 2010 following the consultation within the University.

141/10-11 University Key Performance Indicators, Risk Register and Risk Status Summary Reports

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A draft report of the University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the Director of Management Information and Planning, and Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office), together with an oral report (SC.91/10-11).
- (b) A report on the University's Risk Identification and Assessment for Autumn 2010 from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity), together with an oral report (SC.96/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office))

- (a) That the KPIs were in their third year and were broadly stable, with the majority of measures identified as "Satisfactory" or Amber-Green within the traffic light system.
- (b) That from 2011, the metrics within the IT KPI would change to reflect IT Services' shift in focus to the end-user experience.
- (c) That the Estates KPI was revised this year to include a number of measures related to sustainability.

(by the Head of Governance Support Services)

- (d) That the University KPIs should be considered in conjunction with the Risk Register and Risk Status Summary Report and that both reports, in addition to a covering paper drawing out key themes, would be considered at the meeting of the Council to be held on 26 November 2010, noting that the KPIs indicate a current snapshot of performance within the University whereas the Risk Status Summary provides an assessment of the potential risks within the next three years.

(by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity))

- (e) That the Comprehensive Spending Review and Browne Report (including the Government's response) were considered by stakeholders in light of the risks presented.
- (f) That the contextual factors which underpinned the overall University risks presented were continually changing, and therefore the Risk Register would continue to be monitored in the light of the dynamic environment and refreshed Vision 2015 strategy.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the coversheet to Council for the University Key Performance Indicators report would be amended to indicate the intention to further develop the University KPIs, including the one related to Estates.
- (b) That the November 2010 proposed overall risk status of 4 for the identified risk O3 "Too much institutional bureaucracy hampering innovation and development" be increased, due to the externally imposed bureaucracy with which the University would be forced to comply.
- (c) That the Steering Committee note the issues raised within the KPI and RM reports as set out in papers SC.91 and 96/10-11.
- (d) That those eleven risks marked with an asterisk be reported to the Council as the key University risks via the Risk Status Summary Report and that no additional risks or further management actions were identified to be included within the report.

142/10-11

University Annual Monitoring and Corporate Planning Statements

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Head of Governance Support Services providing an update on the provisional 2010 Corporate Planning Statement (CPS) and Annual Monitoring Statement (AMS), together with an oral report (SC.106/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Governance Support Services)

- (a) That a provisional draft of the CPS was considered by the Senate at its meeting on 6 October 2010.
- (b) A small number of comments that were subsequently received were incorporated into the provisional CPS.
- (c) That there would be an amendment to the answer provided in response to Question 5 of the AMS (Funding for HEIF4) following discussions with the Finance Director.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the revised Corporate Planning Statement be recommended to the Council for approval at its meeting held on 26 November 2010 with a view to submitting it to the HEFCE, acknowledging that the Vision 2015: 2010 Update would be submitted in conjunction with this once it was published, as expected, by the end of February 2011.
- (b) That the Annual Monitoring Statement as set out in paper SC.106/10-11 be approved for submission to the HEFCE by the 1 December 2010 deadline, subject to the revision to the HEIF4 section by the Finance Director.

143/10-11 National Student Forum annual report

RECEIVED:

An executive summary of the final report from the National Student Forum (SC.97/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the National Student Forum was discontinued at the end of the 2009/10 academic year, and the final report focused on the institutional level, as opposed to national policy level.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (b) That the University was already attempting to progress all of the areas considered in the report to be priorities for students.

144/10-11 UCEA Home Affairs Committee Report on the Immigration Cap

RECEIVED:

An update from UCEA regarding the Home Affairs Committee report on the immigration cap (SC.100/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)

- (a) That the Home Affairs Committee report concluded that the proposed cap on the number of migrants entering the UK, unless set at 100%, would have little significant impact on overall immigration levels.
- (b) That the UUK response to the Home Affairs Committee report on 3 November 2010 would need to be considered in the Government's plans for the immigration cap.

145/10-11 SU meeting with local MPs

REPORTED: (by the President of the Student's Union)

That he would be meeting with the four local MPs within the next week to discuss the outcomes of the Browne Review.